Status of rural telephony in Orissa

120. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to float tenders for rural telephony;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what is the total amount of fund that is proposed to be utilized for rural telephony in phased manner;

(d) what is the status of rural telephony in Orissa; and

(e) what is the action plan of Government to speed up this process to improve rural telephony in this region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government is in the process of taking necessary action to provide support for provision of infrastructure for mobile services in rural and remote areas of the country. The infrastructure shall be created in those specified areas where there is no existing fixed wireless and mobile coverage. A draft tender document for setting up and managing infrastructure sites and provision of mobile services in rural and remote areas of the country will be placed shortly on the Department of Telecommunications website for inviting comments/suggestions from stakeholders.

(c) The total amount of funds that is proposed to be utilized for this scheme shall depend upon the outcome of the bidding process to be followed as per tender documents.

(d) and (e) The status of the rural telephony and the action plan of Government to speed up this process is as follows:

* 40,540 villages have been covered with Village Public Telephone (VPTs) in Orissa.
* Replacement of 11,341 Multi Access Radio Relay (MARR) VPTs in Orissa is being done. 9,240 MARR VPTs have been replaced by BSNL till September 2006.
* Provision of Village Public Telephones (VPTs) by November, 2007 in 4,899 remaining unconnected villages in Orissa. This excludes

villages having population less than 100 lying in thick forest areas/ naxalite infested areas etc.

* Provision of Rural Community Phones (RCPs) by September, 2007 in 936 village in Orissa having population of more than 2,000 and not having a PCO. 923 RCPs have been provided by BSNL till September, 2006.

* Provision of subsidy support for 2,00,737 for Rural Household Direct Enchange Levels (RDELs) installed in Orissa prior to 01-04-2002.

* Provision of RDELs 'on demand' in 96 commercially unviable Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs) in Orissa. 31,320 RDELs have been provided by BSNL till September, 2006 under this scheme.

* Subsidy support for provision of 62,068 RDELs installed in the eligible 96 SDCAs of Orissa during the period from 01-04-2002 to 31-03-2005.

Laying of cable between Kaushambi and Vasundhara

†121. MS. SUSHILA TIRIYA:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the matter relating to payment of bills prior to laying of telephone cables between Kaushambi and Vasundhara in Ghaziabad at Delhi border has come to the notice of Government;

(b) if so, the names of officers found guilty and the action taken against them;

(c) the arrangements made by Government to monitor the quality of cables proposed to be laid; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to prevent to recurrence of such incidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) Sir, a case relating to underground (U/G) cable laying in Kaushambi

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.